



MEETING MINUTES / 18 FEBRUARY 2020

ATTENDANCE:

Present: Showell, Lardizzzone, Lopez, Magner, McMullen, Sarg, Seppala **58%**

Excused: Stewart, Baldwin, Bradley, Farley, Newman

Unexcused:

Guests: Archie Poling (Delaware Veterans Home), Pat Cerchio (First State Women Warriors), Kim McMullen, Don Catalon, (Delaware Senior Olympics), Kim Hicks (DHSS), Valerie Watson (Vets-N-Art), Chris Watson (Vets-N-Art)

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS:

Moment of silence for:

Deployed Military members

Passing of John DiEleuterio

Passing of Merriella McMillian

Discussed commissioners' participation during Representative Blunt Rochester's Veterans Round Table and suicide prevention trainings

MEETING MINUTES:

Minutes were motioned by Lardizzzone, seconded by Sarg, approved by all

ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS:

Wilmington VAMC – Virginia Yelland, Assistant to the Director

Not present

Delaware Veterans Home (DVH) – Archie Poling, Interim Director:

75 residents

New administrator Tina Foskey has started

Admissions meeting is scheduled for 19 Feb and two more next week

- Will increase census numbers

Looking into new communication systems

Dental clinic meeting scheduled for 19 Feb to review dental suite project

Exploring new marketing strategy through new administrator

- Meeting is scheduled for this week

(McMullen) What's the construction status?

Construction is complete, looking into renovating bathing suites

Will begin construction on two new bathing suites

(Sarg) With marketing efforts make sure you emphasize the fact that the facility is a skilled nursing facility and not a retirement home

Marketing and advertisement will emphasize skilled nursing and there are now 145 beds (down from 150 due to construction)

Seeking to expand bariatrics capabilities throughout the facility

- Includes lifts and beds

Home of the Brave, Director Jessica Finan:

Not present

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Don Catalon, Delaware Senior Olympics

Delaware Senior Olympics is a feeder for the VA games

- Each state sponsors senior Olympics for support to the games

- Seeking marketing and promotion through veteran service organizations

Trying to bring the VA games to Delaware

Discussed the various competitions (e.g. shooting, archery, cycling, etc.)

Asked that organizations display Olympics materials

Local office is located at Modern Maturity Center (Dover)

- POC is Jeannette

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Bear Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Magner:

Interments – 77 (-1)

Cemetery has 11 flagpoles for veteran service organization flags, and one is empty

- Discussed with Pat Cerchio and will provide First State Military Women Warriors' flag

Millsboro Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Bradley:

Interments – 25 (-4)

Health and Human Services, Commissioner Sarg:

Brain Injury Council assists those with disabilities

Discuss inconsistency with motorcycle safety

Delaware only requires helmet wear during the safety test but not following as a rider

Working with Representative Sean Lynn, through House Bill 14, for seeking motorcycle helmet protection for all riders

Legislative Affairs, Commissioner McMullen:

Sat at commission's information table, at legislative hall, on 29 January

Scheduled to present legislative recommendations before the joint veterans affairs committee on 8 April/1300

Commissioner Baldwin reported that House Bill 265, Property Tax Exemption for 100% Service Connected, was voted out of veterans committee and will be voted on, on the floor

- Urged commissioners to speak to their organizations about support

(Sarg) Recommendations will be signed by myself and Commissioner Showell

- We need to get sponsors for these recommendations

- Signatures quantify the product

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

DVTF Previous Month: Applications 13; Granted 9 (69.2%); Awarded \$11,009.97; Balance - \$36,073.00

- There is an increase in general, under honorable conditions applicants

- Will have a part-time service officer for Kent County due to demands

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:

Commissioner McMullen (Air Force Sergeants Association - AFSA)

Attended chapter executive committee meeting and general membership meeting

- Will swear in new officers during next meeting

22 – 24 Apr: Division 1 Professional Airman Conference, Dayton, OH

29 January: Participated at information table at legislative hall

8 and 13 February: Attended chapter meetings

12 February: Attended Military Affaire

Vacant (American Legion - AL)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Bradley (American Veterans - AmVets)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Lardizzone (Disabled American Veterans - DAV)

23 January: Attended Veterans Home Admissions meeting

30 January: Attended Friends of the Veterans Home meeting

6 February: Attended Veterans Home Admissions meeting

22 January – 13 February: Served 132 veterans for claims, during the fiscal year the National Service Officer served 5,000 veterans

Vacant (Korean War Veterans)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Farley (Marine Corps League - MCL)

22 January: Attended Behavioral Health Consortium meeting

23 January: Attended Delaware Housing Alliance Veterans Committee meeting

5 February: Chaired Dover Mayor's Veterans Crisis Challenge Team meeting

11 February: Participated in MOAA JROTC scholarship fundraiser at Outback Restaurant

12 February: Attended the Military Affaire

13 and 14 February: Attended Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training course

Commissioner Sarg (Military Officers Association of America - MOAA)

23 January: Attended Delaware Veterans Home Admissions meeting

27 January: Attended Delaware Veterans Coalition meeting

29 January: Attended Friends of Delaware Veterans Home meeting

29 January: Participated in Legislative Hall DCVA Table Display and lobbying

30 January: Forwarded Legislative recommendations to Labor Secretary Cade, Deputy Secretary, Department of Labor Stewart, and Retired General Vavala

3 February: Attended Brain Injury Council meeting

5 February: Attended Mayors Crisis Prevention meeting

6 February: Attended Delaware Veterans Home Admissions meeting

11 February: MOAA Outback JROTC Scholarship Fundraiser

12 February: MOAA sponsor at Military Affaire

14 February: Attended roundtable meeting with U.S. Representative Blunt Rochester

17 February: Lobbying with Representative Lynn, 31st District

Commissioner Magner (Military Order of the Purple Heart - MOPH)

8 February: Department Executive Committee approved \$2,000.00 donation to Friends of the Fallen at Dover AFB

8 February: Department Executive Committee approved two \$500.00 donations for the Home of the Brave I, and the Home of the Brave II in Milford

8 February: Department elections resulted in Gary "MO" Morris re-elected as Department Commander

11 February: Request to National Headquarters for 18 JROTC certificates and medals and for two ROTC Programs - University of Delaware and Delaware State University

Commissioner Newman (Veterans of Foreign Wars - VFW)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Baldwin (Vietnam Veterans of America – VVA)

Request veterans service organizations consider a \$500.00 annual donation to the Veteran Trust Fund Endowment

- Consider a Veterans Day donation

- Will provide all tax ID and non-profit data to commissioners

Sent correspondences to numerous veterans committee legislators regarding HB265

- Responses indicate a positive outcome

Met with President Clark at Wesley on Veterans Resource Center Initiative, scheduled a follow up meeting with Student Veterans Organization

- 12 Feb: Met for mindfulness training initiative with Sam Beard and community leads

- - Proposed four session per year at local university/college)

- - Addresses PTSD and TBI

19 Feb: Attending Veterans Health Summit planning meeting

6 March: Organizing field trip for 20 HS students to the Delaware National Guard Aviation Facility

28 March / 1400: Speaker, Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day, Kent County Memorial Park

Meeting with Senator Carper on next on Sussex Military Academy initiative and US Army, new options versus Laurel School District

Meeting with Biden Institute and UD on Veterans Resource Center support

Son deployed on 4 February, please keep him in your prayers

Commissioner Showell (At Large, affiliated with Delaware National Guard)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Seppala (At Large, affiliated with Military Order of World Wars)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Lopez (At Large, affiliated with Delaware Veterans)

21 January: Attended Behavioral Health Consortium

23 January: Attended Veterans Stand Down Kickoff meeting

30 January: Attended Mental Health First Aid Training

5 February: Attended Dover Mayors Crisis Awareness meeting

5 February: Attended DelVets Post 2 Executive and Membership meeting

10 February: Attended DelVets Post 2 Finance Committee meeting

13 – 14 February: Attended Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

21 March: Military Women's Tea

Commissioner Stewart (At Large, affiliated with student veterans' associations)

Nothing to report

TERM COMPLETION:

Bradley – 21 April 2020

Newman – 21 April 2020

Veterans of Foreign Wars submitted names

American Legion, not sure if names were submitted

EVENTS:

5 March / 0800: Table Display, Brain Injury Conference, Dover Downs

4 April / 1000: USS Delaware Event, Port of Wilmington

8 April / 1300: Legislative Recommendation Brief, House Chambers

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**NEW BUSINESS:****ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION:****CLOSED SESSION:**

None

SPECIAL SESSION:

Presentation by Chris and Valerie Watson, Vets-N-Art Therapeutic Alliance

- Initiating a program using art as therapy for veterans

- Chris is an artist who has researched the benefits of a therapeutic program

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, 17 March 2020 at 1000

LOCATION:

Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs